

Collected Poetry

2020 -- 2025

By Linda S Barth

As Inspired by 'Beauty and the Beast'

Part One:

Poems for Winterfest Online

Daily Challenges

Part Two:

Poems for CABB - New Chambers

Challenges

Daily Poetry Challenges -- Winterfest Online 2024

Day 1 Challenge: Shardorma:

Topic: Winterfest

Festival

Gift of love, of light

Thanks offered

Hearts opened

Darkness banished, hope renewed

In shared rejoicing.

Made complete

By the welcoming

Of his Love

To join their

Circle, undeniably

Now part of his world.

Day 2 Challenge: ABC Poem:

Topic Someone's chamber

Pascal's Chamber

Chamber filled with chiming, rhythmic

Echoes in unceasing waves, undying

Heartbeat, pulse, synapse and breath.

Pascal's vocation, calling, legacy –

Gives voice to his world, purpose to his life.

Day 3 Challenge: Cinquain

Topic: The Pipe Chamber

Clanging

Endless, essential

Echoing, chiming, tapping

Assuring we are not alone

Heartbeat

Day 4 Challenge: Strambotto

Topic: Someone in the tunnels

Prelude to the Woodcarver's Redemption

Once gentled by love, grateful heart smoothed and pearled,

He constructed a life of pleasure and awe.

Each day a delight where light shimmered and swirled,

'Til sweet dreams collapsed like a house built of straw.

His beauty, his Betty, her brief life unfurled

And ruptured by death with implacable claws.

Then haven appeared in a bless'd underworld,

But a chance at rebirth was soon forced to pause.

Now chamber of sawdust, gleamed oak, maple burled,

Collection of chisels and hammers and saws,

His touchstones, his heartsong, they make up his world,

Offering him reason and giving him cause.

His constant companions since others have hurled

Their doubts at a man who had broken their laws,

When his anger, his pain burst forth like flames curled

Exposing his darkness, revealing his flaws.

Day 7 Challenge: Roses are red...

Topic: Vincent and Catherine

His cheeks are bright red
And hers sure are, too.
Father walked right in --
But that's nothing new!

The warm, cozy bed
With sheets all askew.
Maybe next time he'll knock
Before getting that view!

Daily Poetry Challenges -- Winterfest Online 2023

Day 1 Challenge: Huitain

Topic: A place Below

Narcissa's World

A mystic realm where few dare travel
Down pathways through an endless night
To a secret place where dreams unravel
Where spells are cast, where dark is bright
Where blinded eyes see more than light.
And bones and shells reveal the fates
Of those who can accept the sight
Of she who dwells there, she who waits.

Day 3 Challenge: Shardorma

Topic: Winslow

Steadfast heart

Faith untouched, unbowed

Sacrificed

Willingly

For a dream he'd never known

And yet he believed

Day 4 Challenge: Chant

Topic: Any two characters who are or could be in love.

I learned to trust in faith and hope

Because you loved me.

I learned how to survive devastation

Because you loved me.

I learned love is as strong as it is fragile

Because you loved me

I learned a lost dream can still be cherished

Because you loved me.

I learned to believe in miracles, Margaret,

Because you loved me.

Day 5 Challenge: Interlocking Rubaiyat

Topic: A situation from the series.

Devin's Journey

Born in darkness, sheltered there
Safe from harm, without a care,
Content at first, but not for long
Too soon his heart beats with despair.

He can't ignore the sirens' song
Of other places he'll belong
The choice he makes is filled with pain
Of what is right and what is wrong.

His hopes will wax, his doubts will wane,
Although the guilt will still remain
A legacy years can't erase
His every joy marked with its stain.

Now in his soul the endless rain
Patters like a sad refrain
Asking questions yet again --
For all he's lost, what has he gained?

Day 6 Challenge: Roses are red...

Topic: Anything lighthearted

To Catherine:

Roses are red
And white sometimes, too.
Don't answer the door
If he's about to kiss you!

Day 7 Challenge: Clerihew

Topic: Joe

He's sweet and kind, smart and hot,
But lucky in love? No, he is not.
What will it take to help our Joe?
Tell him now – he wants to know!

Daily Poetry Challenges -- Winterfest Online 2022

Day 1 Challenge: List Poem

Topic: The Great Hall

Dark
Empty
Cold
Deserted
Isolated
Waiting
Light
Fulfilled
Warmth
Renewal
Connected

Day 2 Challenge: Haiku

Topic: Narcissa

Sees what we cannot
Vision mystical and wise
Light in the darkness

Day 3 Challenge: Villanelle

Topic: Love from Catherine's point of view

Vincent is my destiny
'Though he fears to share our fate
He is everything to me.

I long for the day he'll see
There is no more need to wait
Vincent is my destiny

Other loves can never be
He is truly my soulmate
He is everything to me

I hope Vincent can foresee
All that we will celebrate
Vincent is my destiny

I have learned to live with hope
And I know it's not too late
He is everything to me

Only joy will fill our bond
All my longings will abate
Vincent is my destiny
He is everything to me

Day 4 Challenge: Clerihew

Topic: Joe or Edie

Joe

Joe can't seem to find a date,
Let alone a marriage mate,
But if Cathy had a twin,
Then his good luck might begin.

Edie

Edie was a friend, sharp and cool,
Written out of eps by a fool,
But fanfic writers wouldn't crack,
Before too long, we brought her back.

Day 5 Challenge: Nonet

Topic: Chamber below the Central Park bandshell

I await the first notes floating down
Bathed in flickering twilight's glow
Silken pillows cushion me
And protect lovers' dreams
I hold them gently
Within my heart
Their secret
Place is
Me.

Topic: Father's Study

Candles flickering in rocky nooks
Books heaped in controlled disarray
Chessboard waiting patiently
Mugs filled with steaming tea
His sanctuary
Their meeting place
Family
Father
Home

Day 6 Challenge: Limerick

Topic: Tony Ramos

Enchanted by Elephant's Child
So street smart, part princeling, part wild,
He captured her heart
'Though they had to part,
Their story had us so beguiled.

Topic: Kristopher Gentian

You never know when you might meet
A trickster who's really a treat.
But is he for real,
As your heart he'll steal,
He's shade-y but ever so sweet.

Day 7 Challenge: ABC Poem

Topic: Any character who has lived Above and Below

Cruel choices made,
Destiny embraced,
Ego petted and soothed,
Fed with hope and lies
Lisa, lost and unrepentant

Damaged and destructive
Escape is beyond his reach
Forever lost, never to be redeemed,
Gone is all hope –
Mitch can never return.

Day 9 Challenge: Rondel

Topic: Winterfest Online

Our Winterfest brings joy to all
Friends new and old rejoice as one
Laughing, chatting, there's so much fun
Found in our very own Great Hall.

Offerings on every wall,
Stories and games, we've just begun
Our Winterfest brings joy to all
Friends new and old rejoice as one.

We only wish that time would crawl,
To do it all we have to run
And all too soon the week is spun,
Still friendship holds us in its thrall,
Our Winterfest brings joy to all.

Daily Poetry Challenges -- Winterfest Online 2021

Day 1 Challenge: Synonym Diamante

Topic: Winterfest

WFOL

Warm, Wondrous

Welcoming, Inspiring, Evolving

Light, Laughter, Fun, Discoveries

Sharing, Caring, Dreaming

Amazing, Creative

Celebration

Day 2 Challenge: Free Form

Topic: Love

Love is...

As rare as a perfect diamond

As common as window glass

As difficult as a labyrinth

As easy as country lanes

As elusive as forgotten songs

As certain as classic tales

As brief as candle flames

As eternal as sunrise.

Day 3 Challenge: Tanka

Topic: Kanin

Lost,

Bitter, discouraged,

Yet

Hope remains.

They wait for me.

Day 4 Challenge: Limerick

Topic: Kissing

He's going to kiss her, that's clear.

He'll just keep ignoring my fear.

Don't know why I bother,

I'm only his father,

I might as well go get a beer!

Day 6 Challenge: List Poem

Topic: Central Park

For Vincent

Shakespeare Garden

Lamplit trails

Carousel horses

Fairy tales

Gardens of roses

Concert night

Picnics and promises

Dreams take flight

Cherished moments

Hidden lairs

Moonlit wanderings

Secret prayers

Day 7 Challenge: Clerihew

Topic: Any tunnel character(s)

Father

He's a genuine curmudgeon

There's nothing could ever budge him

Until a smile – and then surprise!

He sees a kiss in Mary's eyes.

Day 8 Challenge: Haiku

Topic: Samhain or Catherine's Balcony

Samhain

The walls disappear

What has been lost becomes found

For just a moment

Catherine's Balcony

A precious retreat

Where two worlds can become one

For now, forever

Daily Poetry Challenges -- Winterfest Online 2020

Day 1 Challenge: Acrostic

Topic: Winterfest

Wishes and dreams, sweet imaginings,
Intricate longings of the heart
Nourished by hope that someday they will come
True, someday they will be real.
Every moment that we share is
Rich with wonder, each small step is
Full of possibilities, and on this
Enchanted night Below
Shall we lead each other through
The darkness until we find the light?

Day 3 Challenge: Alliteration

Topic: Catherine

Catherine cuddles her cloak-covered co-conspirator, constrained by copious clothing, craving a closer caress.

Day 5 Challenge: Cinquain

Topic: Threshold below Catherine's building

Threshold
Shadowed, empty
Longing, waiting, dreaming
Portal to transcendent possibilities
Fulfillment

Day 7 Challenge: Fibonacci

Topic: Any character

Narcissa

Shells
Stones
Arcane
Messages
Clouded eyes that see
The secrets hidden in their souls

Lena

Lost
Hurt
Bereft
Desperate
Seeking love at last
But his heart will never be hers

[This poem was written for the December Holidays 2021 CABB Challenge. The theme was December celebrations, both the traditional events and many unusual – but actual – holidays.]

Catherine's Chocolate Challenge

- Or -

How Can I Celebrate National Chocolate-Covered Anything Day with Vincent?

Some chocolate-covered cheese balls

Or cookies with chocolate chips,

Berries dipped in molten fudge,

Quite inspired, she licks her lips.

Three-layer cakes with frosting,

Or a sweetheart's Valentine,

S'mores toasted by a campfire,

Could there be a chocolate wine?

Vincent so loves chocolate,

There just has to be a way

To satisfy and please him

On Chocolate Anything Day.

Squishy chocolate-filled donuts,

Ice cream smooshed on Mallomars,

A jar of chocolate butter

To spread on a chocolate bar.

A dish of chocolate pudding,
Hot fists of Hanukkah gelt,
Or maybe some Nutella?
Which of these might make him melt?

The list grows ever longer,
Yet the answer isn't there.
She has to find perfection
Or drown in chocolate despair.

I must be more creative,
She vows with a surge of strength,
But cover *what* with chocolate?
I will go to any length!

Chocolate spread on French fries,
Or slathered on bacon strips,
Chocolate on a bagel,
Drizzled on potato chips?

Oh, those ideas are stupid!
She grimaces, groans, and sighs.
There's something that I'm missing,
Something else I need to try.

I've got it now, she shouts out,
This is how I'll make my plan!
To get some inspiration,
I should focus on my man!

She shuts her eyes and lets her
Dreams and visions run quite free.
Soon she can picture Vincent
In chocolatey ecstasy.

Blue eyes gleaming with pleasure,
Lusty sighs filling Below,
Devouring the sweetness
He believed he'd never know.

Furred chocolate-sticky fingers,
Lips with a semi-sweet smudge.
Yes, this was what was missing --
All she'd needed was that nudge.

Her eyes fly open, then she
Throws that useless list away,
And grabs the box of candy
She'd bought for their special day.

Why wait another minute
When the timing's oh so right?
Chocolate Day is tomorrow,
But they'll celebrate tonight.

Hours later Vincent's chamber
Still echoes with melting sighs
Of lovers who'd discovered
The hottest chocolate surprise.

How wondrously they linger
Through the long, delicious night,
Sharing, spreading, savoring
So much chocolatey delight.

Delectably exhausted,
In a sticky, snuggled heap,
They sigh and cuddle closer,
Chocolate promises to keep.

[This poem was written for the Valentine's Day 2022 CABB Challenge.]

Vincent's Valentine Vexation
(A Sequel to Catherine's Chocolate Challenge)

It's February the fourteenth,
But all is very far from well.
For in his chamber far Below
Dear Vincent is going through hell.

This special night's intended for
Best friends and sweet lovers and such,
But just what has Vincent planned on?
Unfortunately, not too much.

But it's not as if he'd tarried,
Or forgotten about the date.
He has tried his best but sadly
Total failure has been his fate.

Finding a gift for Catherine
Turned into a terrible plight.
Of all the things he has thought of
Not even one seems to be right.

Another book of poetry?
A crystal? Been there, done that, too.
He could write a lovely letter –
Or a Valentine IOU.

He knows she would surely savor
Any gift that comes from his heart,
But while his world is wonderful,
It's no place for a shopping cart.

He knows the stores Above are filled
With sweet arrays of special treats,
Silky, lacy, and be-ribboned –
He blushes with delicious heat.

Then groans and moans and stamps his feet,
So distraught he can barely think.
He growls out loud with frustration --
This Valentine's Day really stinks!

Then that word, while so unpleasant,
Offers inspiration at last.
For a gift that smells of sweetness,
But time's short and he needs it fast!

He knows Catherine loves chocolate,
As does he, in every way.
They had proved that last December
On Chocolate Anything Day.

So, he sprints off to the kitchen,
Begs friend William for crucial aid,
And before long it is ready --
Now Valentine's Day will be saved!

Soon on her candlelit terrace
With the cake box so tightly gripped,
Vincent lands very carefully,
Quite relieved that he hadn't tripped.

Catherine claps her hands in glee --
Cries, *What a wonderful surprise!*
He smiles, then sighs with great relief,
He's still a hero in her eyes.

What happens next, you long to ask,
Well, it's time for us to depart.
Our lovers need their privacy
To savor matters of the heart.

So, we'll say farewell and let them
Enjoy an evening quite divine,
Brave Vincent and sweet Catherine,
His one and only Valentine.

[Written for the April 12, 2021 CABB Challenge "Extraordinary Voices"]

Selene

"yours is the light by which my spirit's born"

ee cummings

My life has been transformed.

It was like nothing I have ever known.

He is like nothing I have ever known.

He gazed up at me from the darkness, awakening from a lost dream,

Finding truth in a brother's promise.

I became so much more to him than a globe of lifeless stone, damned to darkness save for the sun's stolen light.

He saw me as his miracle. His reason to believe in the impossible.

For that is what I am to him.

And that is what he is to me.

He is my dream, my promise, my miracle.

He makes me believe in the impossible, for he did what no other ever could.

He ended my aloneness.

Until tonight, I have known nothing but eternal isolation.

There have been others. So many who believed they knew me, could become part of me.

They always tried. They always failed.

Since time began, I have been stared at, fought for, prayed to, marveled over.

The object of artists, poets, musicians, scientists, charlatans.

Seekers of truth, seekers of fame,

But only for themselves, never for me.

I have been coveted and adored.

I have been violated and abandoned.

Some desired me for my beauty. Some wanted only to claim the unattainable.

No one ever saw me for myself. No one ever cared.

Until tonight when that unique face smiled up at me.

When he knew I had always been waiting for him.

When he knew I was more than a dream, more than a promise.

He asks nothing of me.

He simply believes in me.

What we share cannot be destroyed.

He lets us believe in miracles.

[Written for the December Holidays 2021 CABB Challenge.]

Soulmates

A Poem for the Winter Solstice

The wheel of the year turns.

Moment by moment

Darkness recedes,

Light flows forth.

The Holly King retreats

Banishing fear,

The Oak King returns

Nurturing hope.

The wheel of the year spins.

Season by season

At the peak of Yule

A miracle occurs.

Bleak, barren winter melts,

Breath by breath,

Darkness fades away to

Lush summer's promise.

The wheel of the year flows

Unceasing, unwavering,

Each point on its orb

Ever bound one to the next.

Darkness, the bonded partner of light,

Light, invisible without its mate,

Eternally destined,
Existing together or not at all.

Like pleasure and pain
Love and hate
Joy and sorrow
Hope and despair
Birth and death.
Soulmates, conjoined
Inseparable, irrevocably
Breathing the same breath.

.
The wheel of the year revolves.
And we learn, we know
There is no light without darkness
No beauty without beast.
As we emerge from the night,
So shall we enter it again.
As we must die,
So shall we be reborn.

The wheel of the year turns.

[Written for the 2025 Winterfest Online CABB Challenge "Narcissa's Gifts"]

Offerings

A world remote, a life unknown,
Apart by choice, yet not alone.
She lives in darkness full of light,
She sees it all, the dark, the bright.

Her soul can hear what others dream,
And with her heart she'll craft and scheme
Her offerings of answers sought,
Of ways that change, new paths to walk.

She is Cassandra, unbelieved,
Pandora, blessed with hope relieved,
Apollo's daughter, gifts to bear,
Brigid's friend with fiery prayer.

Though some may doubt, discard, disdain
Her gifts that fall like drops of rain,
Still others crave her talents rare
That give them hope, repel despair.

For souls who yearn for what is not,
The broken hearts life has forgot,
She's more than just a secret shared,
A voice unstilled, strength newly dared.

To those who trust, to those who see,
The ones who dream of what might be,
She is a candle in the dark,
A glow of hope, a kindled spark.

She holds the keys, the doors unlock,
Time will rewind a turned-back clock,
Second chances, torn vows mended,
Hope restored and heartbreak ended.

Her visions fill them with belief,
Dispel their doubt and soothe their grief.
But they must hear her words, her voice,
And find the strength to make the choice.

While she tells tales of what might be,
Shows visions that they long to see,
The fates of dreams aren't hers to know,
For only dreamers make them so.

Thank you for reading my collection of 'Beauty and the Beast' themed poems. I hope you enjoyed them. It was fun - and challenging - to write them.

If you would like to read my BatB stories, you can find them on CABB - New Chambers (batbcabb.com)

And if you'd like to find out how to publish your work at next year's Winterfest Online or at CABB - New Chambers, please use the contacts below.

batbcabb.com

batbwfol.com

We'd be happy to welcome you!

Take care, be well, and keep dreaming -

Linda S Barth

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